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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, January 10, 1934.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Keeping Up with the Bureau of Home Economics."

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One day last week I received a call from a young lady who was making her first visit to Washington, D. C. She had gone to Mount Vernon, taken pictures of the Lincoln Memorial, and viewed the city from the top of the Washington monument.

"I've walked enough miles and climbed enough steps to last a lifetime," she said wearily. "I guess I've seen everything, except the Bureau of Home Economics you mention now and then. Is there really such a Bureau, and if so, where?"

I took her over to the Bureau of Home Economics and introduced her to my friends. She forgot her weariness, in her enthusiasm at finding just the information she wanted on low-cost meals, food budgets, children's clothing, and so on. When she left, she was pleased and grateful.

"So that's the Bureau of Home Economics," she said. "How in the world do you ever keep up with all it does? And where has it been all my life?"

Her flippancy question gave me pause. Perhaps some other people have an idea that the Bureau of Home Economics is something vague and nebulous. In spite of all I've said about the Bureau, there may be those who wonder what it's all about.

I'm going to tell you, very briefly, a few outstanding accomplishments of the Bureau of Home Economics during the year 1933. As you will recall, the year 1933 will not be remembered as one of the Golden Years. Far from it. Poor old 1933 probably limped off to join the nineteen hundred and thirty-two other years of history, with its tail between its legs, very much ashamed of its poor record. But we shall not speak ill of the year just gone.

During 1933, the Bureau of Home Economics received more calls for help than ever before -- calls for help in emergency feeding, in food preservation, and in the renovation, making, and purchase of clothing. Homemakers wanted to know how to stretch reduced incomes to cover absolutely necessary items. Relief agencies asked for diet plans that would give the fullest possible return in nutritive value for a small, sometimes a pitiably small, amount of money.

As a contribution to the Agricultural Adjustment program, the Bureau completed plans for four typical diets at four levels of cost. These four diets included a liberal diet, a moderate-cost adequate diet, a minimum-cost adequate diet, and a restricted diet for emergency use.



Along with the food problem, during the year 1933, came the clothing problem. Most of us agree that it's more important to have something to eat than something to wear, but at the same time, the weather being what it is, adequate clothing is a prime necessity.

In cooperation with the Red Cross, the Bureau of Home Economics helped out in the national clothing problem with suggestions for making clothes economically and efficiently. Many of you have seen the circular that was issued, telling how to equip community workrooms. Relief agencies all over the country are now using this circular. There are others on clothing economy and hat economy telling how to recondition used materials.

Now let's see what the Bureau is doing in the way of research -- for after all, except in national emergencies, the Bureau of Home Economics is primarily a research bureau.

First, let's consider Foods and Nutrition. Nutrition studies are being carried on all the time -- studies which will help us to know more about the food value of eggs, cereals, vegetables, and so forth. The nutrition specialists have even separated a head of lettuce into the green and white leaves, and they have found out that the green leaves are about three times as rich in Vitamin G, as the bleached leaves. A good point to remember, when you're making a salad.

Research in the field of food utilization has brought out important facts about cooking fats, eggs, and meat. Here's something about meat that may interest you. If you learned your cooking lessons when I did, no doubt you were taught that a roast should always be seared, "to hold in the juices." As a matter of fact, searing does not hold in the juices. On the contrary, it may cause the meat to lose more weight. The extra loss is mainly fat. But searing is important, in two respects. It improves the appearance of the roast, and makes it cook faster.

In connection with its fruit and vegetable studies, the Bureau has issued a new circular entitled: "Conserving Food Value, Flavor, and Attractiveness in Cooking Vegetables." This circular discusses the pros and cons of baking, steaming, boiling and pan-frying vegetables, gives a time table for cooking the common kinds, and includes suggestions for serving.

The food preservation studies last year included canning, jelly making, and drying of vegetables. Many States recognized the value of community canning centers in their relief programs, and asked advice on canning fruits and vegetables. "Community Canning Centers" is the title of a circular prepared for those who wanted to know more about canning.

Another time, also, I'll tell you more about the Textiles and Clothing Division. The specialists in the Textiles division are surely practical. Right now they are testing the wearing qualities of sheets made from different varieties of cotton. The sheets for the test are being used in a Washington hotel. If you're in Washington this year -- and happen to stop at this particular hotel -- you'll be taking part in one of the studies planned by the Textiles division.

The Bureau of Home Economics does not hide its light under a bushel. If you visited the Century of Progress exhibition you may have seen the four



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exhibits installed by the Bureau. The press and the radio also help spread the information from the bureau. Perhaps you see a weekly article in the newspapers, called "The Family Market Basket". It gives timely suggestions on low-cost food.

In this enlightened day, not even if we tried -- could we help being influenced by the research done by the Bureau of Home Economics.

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Tomorrow: "What the food label does not tell."

